

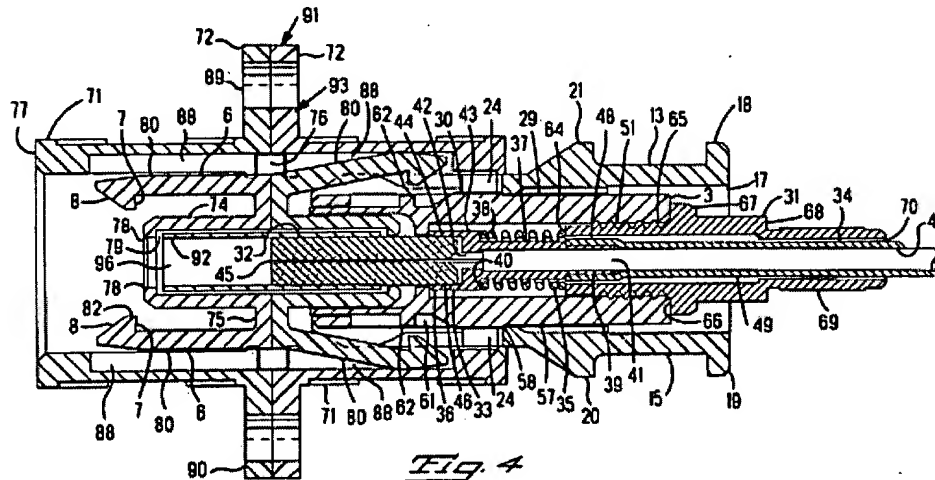
Claims 1-22 are currently pending in this application, with claim 22 being amended by this Amendment.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-5, 19, 21, and 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Mulholland et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,082,344); rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mulholland et al. in view of Terada et al. (U.S. Patent Application Pub. No. US 2002/0114593 A1); rejected claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mulholland et al.; rejected claims 9-13, 15, 16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mulholland et al. in view of Applicant admitted prior art (AAPA); rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mulholland et al. and Terada et al., and further in view of AAPA; and provisionally rejected claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 21 of co-pending Application No. 09/770,368. The Office Action did not reject or object to claims 17 and 18, thus Applicants presume that these claims are allowable.

By this Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 22 to make it dependent upon claim 21, which it should have been in the originally-filed claims. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 101 rejection of claim 22. Applicants respectfully traverse the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1-5, 19, 21, and 22, and the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 6-16 and 20, for the following reasons.

As shown in Fig. 4 (reproduced below), Mulholland et al. discloses a coupling bushing 91 for optical fiber connectors, which is a body comprising two adapter assemblies 4, 93 mated back-to-back. The adapter assemblies 4, 93 are joined to captivate a slotted sleeve 92 and to form a coupling bushing 91 for the interconnection of two push-pull connectors. The adapter assembly 4 includes a base 72 having a rectangular port 76, and a receptacle housing 71 in the

form of a four-sided compartment structure extending forward from the base 72 and open at front receiving end 77. Mulholland et al., however, fails to disclose a faceplate for an optical module, an optical module, or an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide.



In contrast, the present invention recited, for example, in claims 1 and 21, and claims 2-5 and 22 at least by virtue of dependence, comprises a combination of elements, including a conductive faceplate for an optical module, and a faceplate extension projecting from the conductive faceplate, around the periphery of a faceplate opening, and forming an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide. The present invention recited in claim 19 comprises a combination of elements, including the steps of providing a connector opening in the faceplate of an optical communications module, and extending a portion of the faceplate substantially surrounding the periphery of the connector opening to form an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide.

As set forth in the Specification, the present invention enables transceivers to be located at the faceplate opening, while preventing electromagnetic interference (EMI) and electrostatic discharge (ESD). Prior to the present invention, transceivers needed to be located away from a faceplate opening to prevent EMI and ESD, but this arrangement took up valuable circuit board space.

Mulholland et al. fail to disclose the combination of elements recited in claims 1-5, 19, 21, and 22. The reference does not disclose a faceplate for an optical module, an optical module, or an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide. Rather, Mulholland et al. merely disclose a coupling device for two optical fiber connectors. Mulholland et al.'s invention exists since, prior to the present invention, transceivers had to be mounted substantially behind a faceplate, requiring an additional optical interconnection, such as the one disclosed in the reference. Such an arrangement has two drawbacks: (1) it increases the return loss of the system due to the additional optical interface (i.e., the coupling bushing 91 of Mulholland et al.); and (2) it occupies valuable board space.

With regard to the Section 103(a) rejection of claim 6, the Office Action further relied upon Terada et al. for the disclosure of a ferrule holder made from aluminum alloy. However, like Mulholland et al., Terada et al. fail to disclose or suggest a faceplate for an optical module, an optical module, or an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide.

With regard to the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 7 and 8, the Office Action relied only upon Mulholland et al. Claims 7 and 8 depend upon claim 1, and as shown above, Mulholland et al. fail to disclose the combination of elements recited in claim 1.

The Office Action relied upon the combination of Mulholland et al. and AAPA to reject claims 9-13, 15, 16, and 20 under Section 103(a). Claim 9 and claims 10-13, 15, and 16, at least by virtue of dependence, recite a combination of elements, including a conductive faceplate for an optical module, and a plurality of faceplate extensions, each faceplate extension projecting from the conductive faceplate, around the periphery of a corresponding one of a plurality of faceplate openings, and forming an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide. Claim 20 recites a combination of elements, including the steps of providing a plurality of connector openings in a

faceplate, and extending portions of the faceplate substantially surrounding the peripheries of each of the connector openings to form a plurality of electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguides. As discussed above, Mulholland et al. fail to disclose or suggest a faceplate for an optical module, an optical module, or an electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguide (or a plurality of such waveguides). The AAPA merely shows the conventional arrangement of providing transceivers away from a faceplate opening to prevent EMI and ESD, but this arrangement takes up valuable circuit board space. The conventional arrangement also never proposed the electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguides of the present invention.

Finally, with respect to the Section 103(a) rejection of claim 14, the Office Action relied Mulholland et al., Terada et al., and AAPA. Claim 14 depends upon claim 9, and as shown above, Mulholland et al. and AAPA fail to disclose the combination of elements recited in claim 9. Likewise, Terada et al. fail to disclose the combination of elements recited in claim 9 (and claim 14 by dependence) since the reference fails to disclose a faceplate for an optical module, an optical module, or electrostatic or electromagnetic waveguides.

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-22 are allowable over Mulholland et al., Terada et al., and AAPA, whether taken alone or in any reasonable combination. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request the reconsideration and withdrawal of the Section 102(b) rejection of claims 1-5, 19, 21, and 22, and the Section 103(a) rejection of claims 6-16 and 20.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request the reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0308. If a fee is required for an extension of time under

37 C.F.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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EXHIBIT A – Amendments to Specification and/or Claims of Serial No. 09/770,369

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claim 22, as follows:

22. (Amended) An apparatus for attenuating energy, as recited in claim 21, wherein the energy comprises one of electromagnetic interference (EMI), electrostatic discharge (ESD), or a combination of EMI and ESD.